

PEER-MODEL SUPPORT FOR VIRTUAL PRIVATE  
NETWORKS HAVING POTENTIALLY OVERLAPPING  
ADDRESSES

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

5 The present application is a continuation of commonly assigned copending U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 08/997,343, which was filed on December 23, 1997, by Yakov Rekhter and Eric C. Rosen for Peer-Model Support for Virtual Private Networks with Potentially Overlapping Addresses.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

10 *Field of the Invention*

The present invention is directed to communications networking. It is directed particularly to providing routing for private wide-area networks.

*Background Information*

An enterprise that has many sites can build a private wide-area network by placing routers at each site and using leased lines to interconnect them. A router that has a wide-area connection to another router may be called a "backbone router." The "backbone network" is the set of backbone routers and their interconnections.

If every backbone router is connected to every other backbone router, the backbone network is said to be "fully meshed." In a fully meshed backbone network, data that travel from one site to another go through the backbone router at an origin site ("ingress router"), travel over the leased line to the backbone router at the target site ("egress